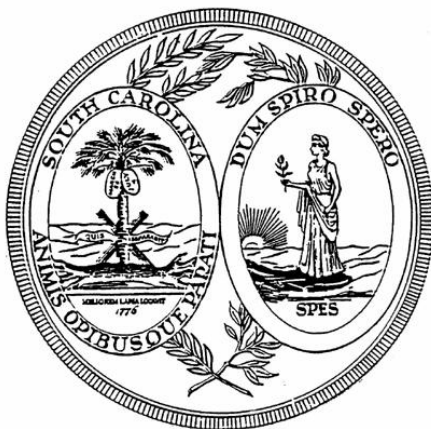


Procedures for the Cyclical Review of Current South Carolina K–12 Academic Standards and for the Development of New Academic Standards



**Jointly Developed by the Staffs of the
South Carolina Department of Education
and the
Education Oversight Committee**

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Overview:

The Nature and Purpose of South Carolina's Academic Standards

Beginning in 2004, the term for the state-approved expectations for student learning and academic performance in South Carolina was changed from *curriculum standards* to *academic standards*. In accordance with the South Carolina Education Accountability Act of 1998 (S.C. Code Ann. § 59-18-100), the State Department of Education (SDE) will provide a performance-based accountability system for students in public education that focuses on improving teaching and learning so that students are equipped with a strong academic foundation.

Academic standards are statements of the most important, consensually determined expectations for student learning in a particular discipline. Each of the newly revised South Carolina standards statements will be supported by specific instructional objectives called “indicators.” Specific statements of the content knowledge and skills that students need in order to meet the particular grade-level or high school core area standards are based on the cognitive process and knowledge dimensions of the revised Bloom’s taxonomy, a widely accepted system for aligning standards, instruction, and assessment that is set forth in *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, edited by Lorin W. Anderson and David R. Krathwohl (New York: Allyn and Bacon, 2001).

The review and revision of South Carolina academic standards are conducted on the basis of criteria developed jointly by staff members of the SDE and the Education Oversight Committee (EOC). The criteria encompass the areas of comprehensiveness and balance, rigor, measurability, manageability, and organization and communication. As a distillation of those criteria, the following principles provide the foundation for the review and revision process:

- The standards define what all students should know and be able to do.
- The standards are aligned with national and world-class standards.
- The standards serve as the basis for decision making and educational policy development.
- The standards provide the foundation for the development of curricula.
- The standards serve as the basis for the development of objective and reliable statewide assessments.
- The content knowledge and skills described in the standards reflect the recognized essential concepts and basic knowledge of the particular discipline.
- The standards are clear, jargon free, appropriate for the particular grade level, complete, and comprehensible to all audiences: educators, policy makers, parents, students, and the general public.
- The standards are rigorous—that is, both demanding and precise, requiring students to master challenging intellectual content and processes—and include indicators that identify the cognitive process and knowledge dimensions from the revised Bloom’s taxonomy.
- The number and scope of the standards for each grade level ensure that they are manageable for teaching and student mastery within an academic year.

- The standards are written at a level of specificity that will best inform instruction, neither so narrow as to be trivial nor so broad as to be meaningless.
- The standards reflect an appropriate balance of content knowledge and skills.
- The standards are aligned across the grade levels for content knowledge and skill development.

I. Procedure for the Cyclical Review and Updating of the Core K–12 Academic Standards to Be Conducted Jointly by the EOC and the SDE

The EOC and the SDE will jointly establish the schedule for the specific review activities and will jointly conduct the cyclical review of current K–12 academic standards in mathematics, English language arts, social studies, and science in accordance with South Carolina law (see the appendix for the relevant sections from the Education Accountability Act of 1998). When the time arrives for the review of the standards of one of these four disciplines, the following actions will be taken:

A. Review of Standards

1. EOC and SDE staff will develop a timeline for the review, revision, and adoption of the standards under consideration.
2. The SDE will appoint a state panel to review the current standards. The panel will consist of state experts in the discipline under review as well as state experts in academic standards, testing, early childhood education, special education (students with disabilities), and English language learners (ELLs). EOC and SDE staff will be invited to attend all review panel meetings held by either the EOC or the SDE.
3. SDE staff will prepare a report on the findings of the state review panel and will share this report with EOC staff.
4. EOC staff will appoint three external review panels: one consisting of national educators and/or education groups and including experts in assessment; a second consisting of South Carolina parents, community leaders, and business leaders; and a third consisting of South Carolina special education teachers and teachers of ELLs.
5. The three EOC panels and the state panel will meet concurrently to examine the standards under review and report recommendations for needed revisions. SDE and EOC staff will be invited to all review team meetings held by the other agency.
6. EOC staff will prepare a report on the review of the standards by the three external EOC panels.
7. The EOC staff report, which will include recommendations for changes to the standards document, will be presented to the Academic Standards and Assessments (ASA) subcommittee of the EOC for approval.
8. After being approved by the ASA subcommittee, the EOC staff report will be presented to the full EOC for approval.
9. After the EOC report is approved by the full EOC, an official copy will be sent to the State Superintendent of Education and the chairperson of the State Board of Education (SBE).

B. Revision of Standards

1. The SDE will develop the initial draft of revised standards on the basis of the current standards, the EOC-SDE criteria for academic standards, the SDE report, and the EOC report.
2. The SDE will identify an external organization to develop a draft of indicators based on the SDE draft of revised standards, the EOC-SDE criteria, the SDE report, and the EOC report.
3. The SDE's Office of Curriculum and Standards will coordinate the review/revision of the draft in consultation with other SDE offices as appropriate.
4. The SDE will prepare a field review version of the draft of revised standards.
5. The SDE will disseminate a draft of the revised standards to South Carolina educators for a field review period of forty-five to sixty days. SDE staff will also disseminate the draft to discipline-based focus groups, EOC-led panels, and others, through presentations and the SDE Web site.
6. The SDE will provide the SBE with an update on the progress of the standards revision and the field review.
7. The SDE will provide the ASA subcommittee of the EOC with an update on the progress of the standards revision and the field review.
8. After completing the field review, the SDE will coordinate any needed changes in the draft.

C. Approval of Standards

1. The SDE will submit the proposed revised academic standards to the SBE for first-reading approval.
2. After receiving first-reading approval from the SBE, the proposed revised academic standards will be sent to the EOC for action. The ASA subcommittee of the EOC will then consider recommending approval or disapproval of the proposed standards as a whole document or in the following parts: K–2, 3–8, and individual high school courses.
3. After the ASA subcommittee makes its decision, that recommendation will be submitted to the full EOC for action. The full EOC can consider approval or disapproval of the proposed standards as a whole document or in the following parts: K–2, 3–8, and individual high school courses.
4. After the full EOC approves the proposed revised academic standards, they will be sent to the State Superintendent of Education and the chairperson of the SBE. The EOC will offer explanations regarding any portion of the standards that were not approved.
5. The proposed revised academic standards or portions thereof approved by the EOC will be published on the SDE Web site.

6. The EOC-approved revised academic standards will be submitted to the SBE for second-reading approval.
7. Any portion of the revised academic standards not approved by the EOC will be returned to the SDE and submitted to the SBE. The SBE will consider the disapproved standards and make recommendations for action.
8. The academic standards in effect at the beginning of the revision process will remain in effect until such time that the revised academic standards are approved by the EOC and the SBE.
9. Once the new academic standards are approved by the SBE and the EOC, they will be disseminated to South Carolina school personnel and school districts and will be published on the SDE Web site.

Outline of the Procedure for the Cyclical Review and Updating of the Core K–12 Academic Standards

The SDE will appoint a panel to review the current standards and report recommendations for needed revisions. The panel will consist of state experts in the discipline under review as well as state experts in academic standards, testing, early childhood education, special education (students with disabilities), and ELLs.



The EOC will appoint three external panels (national education experts; parents and community/business leaders; and special education and ELL teachers) to review the current standards and report recommendations for needed revisions.



The EOC report of the three panels' recommendations will be presented to the ASA and then to the full EOC. The approved EOC report will be sent to State Superintendent of Education.



The SDE will develop an initial draft of the revised standards and will identify an external organization to develop a draft of indicators based on the SDE draft of revised standards, the EOC-SDE criteria, the SDE report, and the EOC report.



The SDE will coordinate the review/revision of the draft in consultation with other SDE offices as appropriate and will prepare a field review draft.



The SDE will disseminate a draft of the revised standards to educators for a statewide field review period of forty-five to sixty days and will also disseminate the draft to discipline-based focus groups, EOC-led panels, and others, through presentations and the SDE Web site. The SDE will provide the SBE and the ASA subcommittee of the EOC with an update on the progress of the standards revision and the field review.



The SDE will make final changes to the proposed standards on the basis of the field review.



FIRST READING

The proposed standards will be presented to the SBE for approval and will be published on the SDE Web site.



After receiving first-reading approval by the SBE, the proposed standards will be presented to the EOC for approval. Proposed standards not receiving approval will be returned to the SDE and the SBE for action.



SECOND READING

The proposed standards approved by the EOC will be presented to the SBE for approval. Upon receiving SBE approval, the standards will be disseminated to the public.

II. Procedure for the Development of New Academic Standards to Be Conducted Jointly by the EOC and the SDE

The EOC and the SDE will jointly establish the schedule for the specific activities and will jointly conduct the development of new academic standards in accordance with South Carolina law. The following actions will be taken:

A. Development of Standards

The SDE either (a) will appoint a state team—which may include experts in the discipline under review as well as experts in testing, special education (students with disabilities), ELLs, and/or early childhood education—to develop a draft of new standards and indicators or (b) will identify an external organization to develop a draft of new standards and indicators. The EOC-SDE criteria for academic standards will be used by the state team/external organization to develop the academic standards.

B. Review of Standards

1. The EOC will appoint three external review panels: one consisting of national educators and/or education groups and including experts in assessment; a second consisting of South Carolina parents, community leaders, and business leaders; and a third consisting of South Carolina special education teachers and teachers of ELLs.
2. The three EOC panels will review the draft of new standards and indicators and will report their recommendations for needed revisions. SDE and EOC staff will be invited to all review panel and team meetings held by the other agency.
3. EOC staff will prepare a report on the review of the new standards by the three external panels.
4. The EOC staff report, including recommendations for changes to the new standards, will be presented to the ASA subcommittee of the EOC for approval.
5. After being approved by the ASA subcommittee, the EOC report will be presented to the full EOC for approval.
6. After the EOC report is approved by the full EOC, an official copy will be sent to the State Superintendent of Education and the chairperson of the SBE.

C. Revision of Standards

1. The SDE will coordinate the review/revision of the draft in consultation with other SDE offices as appropriate.
2. The SDE will prepare a field review version of the new standards draft.
3. The SDE will disseminate the draft of the new standards to South Carolina educators for a field review period of forty-five to sixty days. SDE staff will also disseminate the draft to discipline-based focus groups, EOC-led panels, and others, through presentations and the SDE Web site. The SDE will provide the SBE and the ASA subcommittee of the EOC an update on the progress of the standards development and the field review.
4. The SDE will make final changes to the draft of the new standards on the basis of the field review.

D. Approval of Standards

1. The SDE will submit the proposed new academic standards to the SBE for first-reading approval.
2. After receiving SBE first-reading approval, the proposed new academic standards will be sent to the EOC for action. The ASA subcommittee of the EOC will then consider recommending to the full EOC the approval or disapproval of the proposed standards.
3. After being approved or disapproved by the ASA subcommittee, the proposed new academic standards will be submitted to the full EOC for action.
4. After the full EOC approves the proposed new standards, they will be sent to the State Superintendent of Education and the chairperson of the SBE. The EOC will provide explanations as to why any new standards were not approved.
5. The proposed new academic standards approved by the EOC will be published on the SDE Web site.
6. The EOC-approved new academic standards will be submitted to the SBE for second-reading approval.
7. Standards not approved by the EOC will be reviewed by the SDE and submitted to the SBE for additional action.
8. Once the new academic standards are approved by the SBE and the EOC, they will be disseminated to South Carolina school personnel and school districts and published on the SDE Web site.

Outline of the Procedure for the Development of New Core K–12 Academic Standards

The SDE either (a) will appoint a state team—which may include experts in the discipline under review as well as experts in testing, special education (students with disabilities), ELLs, and/or early childhood education—to develop a draft of new standards and indicators or (b) will identify an external organization to develop a draft of new standards and indicators.



The EOC will appoint national, parent/community/business, and special education/ELL panels to review the new standards and will develop a report of recommendations for needed revisions.



The EOC report on the three panels' recommendations regarding the new standards will be presented to the ASA subcommittee and then to the full EOC for approval. The approved EOC review report will then be sent to the State Superintendent of Education and to the chairperson of the SBE.



SDE staff will coordinate the review/revision of the draft as appropriate and will prepare a field review version of the new standards draft.



The SDE will disseminate the draft of the new standards to districts and schools for a statewide field review period of forty-five to sixty days and will also disseminate the draft to discipline-based focus groups, EOC-led panels, and others, through presentations and the SDE Web site. The SDE will provide to the SBE and the ASA subcommittee an update on the progress of the standards development and the field review.



The SDE will make the final changes to the draft of the new standards on the basis of the field review.



FIRST READING

The proposed new standards will be presented to the SBE for approval and will be published on the SDE Web site.



The proposed new standards will be presented to the EOC for approval. Proposed standards not receiving approval will be returned to the SDE and the SBE for action.



SECOND READING

The proposed standards approved by the EOC will be presented to the SBE for approval. Upon receiving SBE approval, the standards will be disseminated to the public.

III. Procedure for the Cyclical Review and Updating of Other K–12 Academic Standards to Be Conducted by the SDE

The SDE is responsible for conducting the cyclical review and updating of K–12 academic standards in visual and performing arts, foreign languages, physical education, and health and safety education. SDE staff will determine when the current standards in these disciplines are to be reviewed and revised and will establish a schedule for the specific review activities. When the time arrives for the review of the standards for one of these four disciplines, the SDE will notify the EOC, for information purposes only, that the revision process is beginning and the following actions will occur:

A. Review of Standards

The SDE will appoint a state panel to review the standards and recommend specific revisions. The panel will consist of state experts in the discipline under review as well as state experts in academic standards, testing, early childhood education, special education (students with disabilities), and ELLs.

B. Revision of Standards

1. The SDE either (a) will appoint a state team—which may include experts in the discipline under review as well as experts in testing, special education (students with disabilities), ELLs, and/or early childhood education—to develop a draft of revised standards and indicators or (b) will identify an external organization to develop a draft of revised standards and indicators. The EOC-SDE criteria for academic standards will be used by the state team/external organization.
2. The SDE’s Office of Curriculum and Standards will coordinate the review/revision of the draft in consultation with other SDE offices as appropriate.
3. The SDE will prepare a field review version of the revised standards, which will be disseminated to South Carolina educators for a review period of forty-five to sixty days. The field review draft of the standards will also be disseminated through the SDE Web site and through presentations to discipline-based focus groups. The SDE will provide the SBE with an update on the progress of the standards revision and the field review.
4. The SDE will make the final changes to the revised standards draft on the basis of the field review.

C. Approval of Standards

1. The SDE will submit the proposed revised academic standards to the SBE for first-reading approval.
2. After receiving SBE first-reading approval, the proposed revised academic standards will be published on the SDE Web site and will be submitted to the SBE for second-reading approval.
3. After receiving SBE second-reading approval, the newly adopted academic standards will be disseminated to school districts statewide and will be published on the SDE Web site. For information purposes only, the SDE will notify the EOC that the revision process has been completed.

Outline of the Procedure for the Review and Updating of Other K–12 Academic Standards

The SDE will appoint a state panel to review the current standards and report recommendations for needed revisions. The panel will consist of state experts in the discipline under review as well as state experts in academic standards, testing, early childhood education, special education (students with disabilities), and ELLs.



The SDE either (a) will appoint a development team to revise the standards and indicators or (b) will identify an external organization to develop a draft of the revised standards and indicators based on the generic specifications and the state panel report.



The SDE will coordinate the review/revision of the draft in consultation with other SDE offices as appropriate and will prepare a field review version of the revised standards.



The draft of the revised standards will be sent to districts and schools statewide and disseminated through the SDE Web site and through presentations to discipline-based focus groups for a field review period of forty-five to sixty days and an update will be presented to the SBE.



The SDE will make the final changes to the draft of the revised standards on the basis of the field review.



FIRST READING

The proposed revised academic standards will be presented to the SBE for approval.



SECOND READING

The proposed revised academic standards will be presented to the SBE for approval. Upon receiving SBE approval, the standards will be disseminated to the public. For information purposes only, the SDE will notify the EOC that the revision process has been completed.

APPENDIX

Key Passages in the Education Accountability Act

Article 1 General Provisions

SECTION 59-18-100. Performance based accountability system for public education established; “accountability” defined.

The General Assembly finds that South Carolinians have a commitment to public education and a conviction that high expectations for all students are vital components for improving academic achievement. It is the purpose of the General Assembly in this chapter to establish a performance based accountability system for public education which focuses on improving teaching and learning so that students are equipped with a strong academic foundation. Accountability, as defined by this chapter, means acceptance of the responsibility for improving student performance and taking actions to improve classroom practice and school performance by the Governor, the General Assembly, the State Department of Education, colleges and universities, local school boards, administrators, teachers, parents, students, and the community.

SECTION 59-18-110. Objectives.

The system is to:

- (1) use academic achievement standards to push schools and students toward higher performance by aligning the state assessment to those standards and linking policies and criteria for performance standards, accreditation, reporting, school rewards, and targeted assistance;
- (2) provide an annual report card with a performance indicator system that is logical, reasonable, fair, challenging, and technically defensible which furnishes clear and specific information about school and district academic performance and other performance to parents and the public;
- (3) require all districts to establish local accountability systems to stimulate quality teaching and learning practices and target assistance to low performing schools;
- (4) provide resources to strengthen the process of teaching and learning in the classroom to improve student performance and reduce gaps in performance;
- (5) support professional development as integral to improvement and to the actual work of teachers and school staff; and
- (6) expand the ability to evaluate the system and to conduct in-depth studies on implementation, efficiency, and the effectiveness of academic improvement efforts.

SECTION 59-18-120. Definitions.

As used in this chapter: . . .

- (6) “Academic achievement standards” means statements of expectations for student learning.



Article 3
Academic Standards and Assessments

SECTION 59-18-300. Adoption of educational standards in core academic areas.

The State Board of Education is directed to adopt grade specific performance-oriented educational standards in the core academic areas of mathematics, English/language arts, social studies (history, government, economics, and geography), and science for kindergarten through twelfth grade and for grades nine through twelve adopt specific academic standards for benchmark courses in mathematics, English/language arts, social studies, and science. The standards are to promote the goals of providing every student with the competencies to:

- (1) read, view, and listen to complex information in the English language;
- (2) write and speak effectively in the English language;
- (3) solve problems by applying mathematics;
- (4) conduct research and communicate findings;
- (5) understand and apply scientific concepts;
- (6) obtain a working knowledge of world, United States, and South Carolina history, government, economics, and geography; and
- (7) use information to make decisions.

The standards must be reflective of the highest level of academic skills with the rigor necessary to improve the curriculum and instruction in South Carolina's schools so that students are encouraged to learn at unprecedented levels and must be reflective of the highest level of academic skills at each grade level.

SECTION 59-18-310. Development or adoption of statewide assessment program to measure student performance.

(B) The statewide assessment program in the four academic areas shall include grades three through eight, an exit examination which is to be first administered in grade ten, and end of course tests for gateway courses in English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies for grades nine through twelve.

(C) While assessment is called for in the specific areas mentioned above, this should not be construed as lessening the importance of foreign languages, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and career/occupational programs.



SECTION 59-18-320. . . . adoption of new standards.

(D) Any new standards and assessments required to be developed and adopted by the State Board of Education, through the Department of Education, must be developed and adopted upon the advice and consent of the Education Oversight Committee.



SECTION 59-18-360. Cyclical review of state standards and assessments by academic area.

The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Education Oversight Committee, shall provide for a cyclical review by academic area of the state standards and assessments to ensure that the standards and assessments are maintaining high expectations for learning and teaching. All academic areas must be initially reviewed by the year 2005. At a minimum, each academic area should be reviewed and updated every seven years. After each academic area is reviewed, a report on the recommended revisions must be presented to the Education Oversight Committee for its consideration. After approval by the Education Oversight Committee, the recommendations may be implemented. As a part of the review, a task force of parents, business and industry persons, community leaders, and educators, to include special education teachers, must examine the standards and assessment system to determine rigor and relevancy.